



NRC NEWS

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NRC BEGINS SPECIAL INSPECTION OF PUMP FAILURE AT PERRY NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has begun a special inspection to review the circumstances surrounding a failure of a pump which provides cooling water to various safety systems at the Perry Nuclear Power Plant. The plant, located in Perry, Ohio, is operated by FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company.

The pump in the emergency service water system failed during testing on Friday, May 21. Plant personnel shut the plant down on Saturday to investigate the cause of the pump failure and to make necessary repairs.

The pump is one of three in the emergency service water system. At the time of the failure, the other pumps were available to provide cooling to plant equipment if needed.

A similar failure of this pump occurred during testing on September 1 of last year. That problem was attributed to improper reassembly of the pump following maintenance in 1997.

The NRC had started a broad team inspection on May 17 to review that September 1 pump failure along with two other equipment problems which have occurred at Perry over the past 18 months. These equipment problems were determined to be of low to moderate safety significance -- "white" inspection findings in the NRC classification of problems which ranges from "green," for findings of minor safety significance, through "white," "yellow," and "red," indicating increasing safety significance.

The May 17 inspection team has concluded the first week of its inspection and plans to return June 7 for a second week of inspection.

The special inspection looking at the May 21 failure is separate from the broader team inspection, although both involve the NRC's resident inspector at Perry.

The reports of both the special inspection and the broader equipment inspection will be publicly available about a month following the completion of the inspections. They may be obtained from the Region III Office of Public Affairs or from the NRC's online document library:
<http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html> - use docket number 05000440 to locate Perry

documents. Assistance in using the online document library is available by calling the NRC Public Document Room at 800-397-4209.

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